

Message Text

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41

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INR-10

INRE-00 NSAE-00 IO-13 DPW-01 AID-20 PM-07 NSC-10

SS-15 RSC-01 L-03 H-03 PA-03 PRS-01 RSR-01 OMB-01

/139 W

----- 021057

O R 221217Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5509

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMCONSUL UDORN

USDEL JEC PARIS

USIA WASHDC

SECDEF

USDAO SAIGON

DIRNSA FT GG MEADE MD

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC

COMUSMACTHAI

DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI

CINCPACFLT

CINCPACAF

CDR USSAG NKP

CDR 13 AF ADVON UDORN

388 TSC KORAT

DODSPECREP BANGKOK

DODSPECREP NKP

CHSPECATS BANGKOK

7 ACCS KORAT

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354 TFW KORAT RTAFB

56 SOW NKP
432 TRW UDORN
CDR JCRC NKP
8 TFW UBON
ARMA/AIRA VTN LAOS
ARMA/AIRA SVKT LAOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 5863

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PINS, PFOR, LA
SUBJECT: LAO SITUATION REPORT - 22 AUGUST 1973

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD; 13 AF ADVON, 432 TFW, 56 SOW, 388 TFW,
354 TFW AND 8 TFW FOR DO/DI; MACTHAI FOR J-2 AND PAO

REF: VIENTIANE 5796

1. MILITARY SITUATION:

A. MR-I: THREE PL DETONATED FRIENDLY MINE DURING MINOR GROUND ATTACK
22 KMS NORTHEAST OF BAN HOU EI SAI, AUGUST 17, WITH UNKNOWN
CASUALTIES.

B. MR-II: UNKNOWN SIZED ENEMY UNIT INITIATED MAJOR GROUND ATTACK
40 KMS SOUTHEAST OF MUONG MOC (VF 1082), AUGUST 17, OVERRUNNING
JULIET HELICOPTER PAD AND SCATTERING APPROXIMATELY 500 REFUGEE
FAMILIES. PAD RETAKEN WITHOUT OPPOSITION ON AUGUST 19.

C. MR-III: MINOR ENEMY-INITIATED GROUND ATTACK TOOK PLACE
AUGUST 15 IN BAN BUNG XANG AREA (WD 4011) WHEN ONE PL PLATOON
ATTACKED FRIENDLY SQUAD, KILLING ONE. ON AUGUST 16, ANOTHER ENEMY
PLATOON STRUCK FRIENDLY SQUAD 17 KMS SOUTHWEST OF MUONG PHALANE
WITH NO CASUALTIES REPORTED. MAJOR ENEMY-INITIATED GROUND ATTACK
SUPPORTED BY MORTARS OCCURRED AUGUST 18 IN BAN BUNG XANG AREA
(WD 4011) WHEN TWO NVA COMPANIES ATTACKED FRIENDLY COMPANY WITH
THREE ENEMY WIA AND NO FRIENDLY CASUALTIES. ENEMY PLATOON INITIATED
ANOTHER MINOR GROUND ATTACK FIVE KMS SOUTHWEST OF DONG HENE ON AUGUST
19, ASSAULTING FRIENDLY COMPANY. NO CASUALTIES REPORTED. RLAF FLEW
ONE AC-47 MISSION IN SUPPORT.

D. MR-IV: ON AUGUST 15 FRIENDLY PLATOON CLASHED WITH ENEMY SQUAD
27 KMS NORTHWEST OF KHONG SEDONE WITH ONE FRIENDLY WIA AND TWO
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ENEMY WIA. MINOR GROUND ATTACK OCCURRED 28 KMS NORTHEAST OF PKSE
ON AUGUST 19 WHEN FRIENDLY PATROL FOUGHT ENEMY SQUAD WITH ONE
FRIENDLY WIA AND TWO ENEMY WIA.

II. POLITICAL SITUATION

A. THE SITUATION IN LAOS HAS RETURNED ALMOST TO NORMAL, EXCEPT
FOR A 2200-0500 HOURS CURFEW IN VIENTIANE. HUNT IS CONTINUING IN
BOTH LAOS AND THAILAND FOR ESCAPED LEADERS OF THE ABORTIVE AUG 20

COUP ATTEMPT. NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE RLG AND LPF HAVE NOT BEEN RECONVENED, ALTHOUGH IT IS ANTICIPATED THEY WILL GET UNDERWAY AGAIN ONCE LPF NEGOTIATOR PHOUN SIPRASEUTH RETURNS FROM CONSULTATIONS IN SAM NEUA. IT IS EXPECTED THAT PHOUN WILL RETURN AUGUST 23 AEROFLOT FLIGHT FROM HANOI.

B. LPF PLENIPOTENTIARY REPRESENTATIVE PHOUMI VONGVICHIT CALLED ON SOUVANNA AUGUST 21. ACCORDING TO BOTH VIENTIANE DOMESTIC SERVICE AND RADIO PATRIOTIC NEUTRALIST FORCES RADIO(PNFR), PHOUMI CONGRATULATED SOUVANNA FOR DEFEATING THE REBELS AND, ACCORDING TO RPNF, THEY ALSO DISCUSSED THE FORMATIN OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF "CORDIALITY AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING".

C. IN GENERAL, THE COMMUNIST MEDIA HAVE EMPHASIZED THE RIGHTIST CHARACTER OF THE ABORTIVE REVOLT, ACCUSING THE "SANANIKONE CLIQUE". AND "THAILAND REACTIONARIES" OF FORMENTING IT TO TORPEDO THE FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT.SEE PARA F BELOW.

D. THE RLG ALSO EXPRESSED INITIAL CONVERN OVER POSSIBLE THAI INVOLVEMENT, BUT WERE CALMED WHEN THE RTG MOVED QUICKLY TO EXPRESS ITS SUPPORT FOR THE RLG AND SOUVANNA. IN OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON AUGUST 20, THE RTG DENIED SUPPORTING THE COUP, AND BOTH PRIME MINISTER THANOM AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PRAPHET MADE STATEMENTS TO SAME EFFECT. ON THE 21ST, SOUVANNA THANKED THANOM FOR HAVING EXPRESSED "FULL AND UNCHANGING SUPPORT" OF THE RLG.

E. THE COUP ATTEMPT ABSORBED SOME OF SOUVANNA'S ENERGY; BUT THERE IS WIDESPREAD HOPE THAT HIS SUCCESS WILL SERVE TO UNDERSCORE THE INTERNATIONAL NATURE OF HIS SUPPORT AND THE BASIC LOYALTY OF THE FAR TO SOUVANNA DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENCES. AT A MEETING LATE TODAY WITH LOCAL DIPLOMATS, SOUVANNA EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT AGREEMENT WITH LPF COULD BE REACHED BY WEEK'S END.

F. DEPUTY LPF NEGOTIATORS SOTH, SOUK AND MAHA KOU HELD PRESS CONFERENCE AT LPF HEADQUARTERS IN VIENTIANE 1700 LOCAL AUGUST 22 AND READ OFF STATEMENT AUTHORIZED BY SAM NEUA LPF CENTRAL COMMITTEE (AND ALREADY DELIVERED IN HANOI) (PER FBIS OKINAWA 211635Z AUGUST) CLAIMING THAT COUP WAS ATTEMPTED TO TORPEDO CONCLUSION OF PROTOCOL
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TO IMPLEMENT VIENTIANE AGREEMENT. STATEMENT ASSERTED THAT ATTEMPT WAS AT INSTIGATION OF SANANIKONE CLIQUE WITH COLLUSION OF EXILED OFFICERS, LIKE PHOUMI NOSAVAN. STATEMENT ALSO ACCUSED U.S.OF INDIRECT

COMPLICITY BECAUSE THE US IS KNOWN SUPPORTER OF "ULTRA REACTIONARY ELEMENTS." IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, SOTH SAID THAT IMPLICATION OF SANANIKONES IS EVIDENT FROM FACT THAT WHENEVER SANANIKONES PARTICIPATE IN NEGOTIATIONS, THE TEMPO SLOWS. ASKED WHY HE BLAMED U.S. FOR SUPPORTING THE COUP, SOTH ANSWERED THAT PHOUMI NOSAVAN AND THAO MA WERE SUPPORTED IN PAST BY U.S. AND THEREFORE THE U.S. MUST BE PRESUMED STILL TO HAVE CONNECTIONS WITH THEM AND HAVE BEEN AWARE OF THEIR ACTIVITIES. ASKED TO EXPLAIN U.S. ANNOUNCED SUPPORT OF SOUVANNA, SOTH REPLIED "ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE ANNOUNCEMENTS, BUT ACTIONS ARE ANOTHER THING." SOTH DID SAY THAT LPF NEGOTIATOR PHOUN SIPRASEUTH WILL BE RETURNING TO VIENTIANE "SOON."

ON EITHER AUGUST 23 OR 25.

DEAN

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